

# Willow Brook Primary School Academy

190 Church Road, Leyton, E10 7BH

**Inspection dates** 21–22 May 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires special measures.

- Safety routines are inadequate because leaders do not ensure that pupils are sufficiently secure within the school grounds.
- Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make slow progress in reading, writing and mathematics because teaching is inadequate.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations. They do not use information about what pupils already know to set challenging work in lessons or adjust the difficulty for different ability groups.
- Teachers' marking fails to give pupils guidance about how to improve their work. Work in pupils' books is often poorly presented.
- Children's progress is slow in the Nursery and Reception because they do not develop their skills and understanding in using the outdoor area.
- Pupils do not extend their reading, writing and mathematical skills in other subjects.
- The headteacher has not provided the direction needed to bring about improvements. Targets for teachers' and leaders' performance lack sufficient challenge.
- Leaders, including middle leaders, have not been rigorous enough in their checking of the quality of teaching or pupils' progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make inadequate progress. Leaders have not ensured that these pupils are appropriately supported or that their progress is regularly and effectively monitored.
- Until recently, governors have not held leaders to account for the progress of pupils or for keeping parents and carers well informed.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning require improvement. When teaching is dull or the work is not at the right level of challenge, some pupils lose concentration and do not finish their work.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils say they enjoy school, that staff deal with problems quickly, and that pupils usually work and play together happily.
- Pupils make good progress in art, physical education (PE) and music because these subjects are taught more effectively.
- The newly reformed governing body is beginning to understand its role in improving the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 30 lessons or parts of lessons. Of these, 19 were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- Inspectors talked to pupils both informally and formally, heard them read and looked at samples of their work.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents and carers, including 15 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire. They also talked to several parents and carers before school and considered the views of staff expressed in 39 questionnaires.
- Discussions were held with representatives from the local authority’s advisory service and the Griffin Trust, which included the Chair of the Governing Body. They held discussions with members of the senior and extended leadership teams.
- Inspectors examined pupils’ progress information and the work of a randomly selected group of pupils supported by pupil premium funding (extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children in local authority care). In addition other school documentation, including the governing body meeting minutes and information relating to targets set for teachers and safeguarding, was scrutinised.

## Inspection team

Barbara Firth, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Steven Smith

Additional Inspector

Paula Farrow

Additional Inspector

Justina Ilochi

Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.*

*Inspectors strongly recommend that the academy should not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.*

## Information about this school

- Willow Brook Primary School Academy converted to become an academy in September 2012. When its predecessor school, Willow Brook Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be satisfactory.
- This is an above-average-sized school. The majority of pupils come from a number of minority ethnic groups. The largest groups are Any Other White, Pakistani and African heritage. Almost all pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well above national average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or at school action plus is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is well above the national average. All pupils in this group are those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- In 2013, the academy did not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has experienced high levels of staffing changes since becoming an academy.
- Since January 2014, the academy has been receiving a high level of support from the Griffin School Trust, which will be taking over sponsorship of the academy in September 2014.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- As a matter of urgency, improve the safety of the pupils by ensuring that:
  - the school site is fully secure at all times
  - routines for monitoring access into the school are rigorously applied.
- Improve teaching so that it is at least good, in order to raise pupils' attainment and ensure that they achieve well across the school, by:
  - eradicating weak or inadequate teaching
  - raising expectations for all pupils and making sure that work given to them is interesting and challenging, especially for more-able pupils
  - using information on pupils' attainment and progress to make sure activities meet the needs of all ability groups, especially for those pupils with special educational needs and the more-able
  - extend pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in different ways, including ensuring staff help pupils to develop their reading skills effectively
  - establishing a consistent approach to marking to help pupils improve their work
  - insisting on better standards of spelling and presentation across the school
  - improving provision in the Reception and Nursery classes by ensuring that children have

increased understanding of how to use resources in the outdoor area.

■ Improve leadership, management and governance by ensuring that:

- systems to check the quality of teaching and pupils' progress are regularly and rigorously applied
- all teachers and leaders are held accountable for their practice and are aware of how their performance links to improvements in pupils' achievement
- ensuring that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive timely, appropriate support so that they make rapid progress
- the use of additional funding such as that used to support pupils eligible for free school meals is rigorously monitored
- ways are found to engage effectively with parents and carers, both to listen to and respond to their views, to help them support their child's learning
- the governing body takes further steps to ensure that its work has the required impact on improving the school.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

The review of governance already started by the Griffin School Trust, in readiness for taking over the sponsorship of the academy in September 2014, should be completed as soon as possible.

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## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is inadequate

- Observations in lessons, the school's checks on progress and pupils' current and past work all indicate that their achievement is inadequate.
- In the most recent national tests, attainment was well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Information from the school indicates that there is little sign of an improvement for the current year. In addition, too few pupils attain the higher levels at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Children enter Nursery and Reception classes with language, number and social skills generally below those expected for their age. They make expected progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage and enter Year 1 with skills just below the national average. They do not make better progress because tasks are not challenging enough and opportunities to extend their learning and make choices in the outdoor area are too limited.
- Although results in the 2013 Year 1 phonics (the sounds letters make) check were in line with the national average, reading continues to be one of the weak aspects of pupils' learning. In the most recent national tests, their attainment in reading was significantly below the national average. Pupils were eight months behind the national average in Year 2 and 14 months behind in Year 6. The school does not promote reading well, especially in Key Stage 2, where pupils are not confident to read either to themselves or aloud.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are not consistently developed or reinforced in other subjects. Pupils' poor spelling and presentation has an impact on their writing skills. The range of resources and approaches used to teach writing and mathematics do not enable all pupils to make good progress. Pupils have extra teachers in Year 6 to help with the development of these skills, but support in the rest of the school is limited.
- The school's promotion of equal opportunity is inadequate. There are differences in achievement across different groups of pupils. This includes those that speak English as an additional language or are of Any Other White, Pakistani or African heritage. Rates of progress vary from pupils' different starting points and so not all reach the standards that they should. The more-able pupils do not achieve well enough, because expectations are too low and work is often too easy for them.
- Pupils eligible for additional funding attain less well than similar pupils nationally and make less progress in all subjects than fellow pupils. In 2013, eligible pupils in Year 6 were two terms behind their peers in reading and one term in writing. School information indicates that although the attainment gap is closing, achievement is still inadequate for these pupils. Very few specific additional activities take place for eligible pupils, and those occurring are not monitored for their impact on pupils' progress.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is also inadequate. Support is not targeted well enough or tasks adjusted in order to ensure that pupils make the best progress they can from their individual starting points.

### The quality of teaching

### is inadequate

- The quality of teaching is inadequate because it does not ensure that pupils achieve well over time. This has been a consistent picture since the academy opened. Recent training and support for teachers have not had sufficient impact on tackling weaknesses seen in lessons.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils are not high enough. They do not use information about pupils' progress to plan activities which ensure that pupils make good progress. Too often, all pupils have the same task. As a result, there are times when activities set do not challenge the most-able pupils and they work at a lower level than they should. At these times, and when the work is not interesting enough, some pupils become bored and do not work as hard as they could. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson in which pupils were using charts to record information, more-able pupils did not learn anything. This is because they all chose bar charts,

which they could already do well, in line with the rest of the class because they found it easier.

- Teachers do not always make sure that pupils spell correctly or present their work neatly and accurately. As a result, pupils repeat the same mistakes. Marking does not give clear enough guidance on how well pupils are doing or how to improve. Comments are often too general, such as 'well done'. Pupils are not systematically given the time to act upon the advice given in marking and this restricts how well their work improves.
- While there is some effective in-class support, teaching assistants are mainly in Years 1 and 2 to withdraw pupils and carry out one-to-one support for reading. Sometimes, pupils come out of class during the teacher's introduction to the lesson. When this happens, their learning is impaired because they miss the explanation of what they will be doing when they return to class.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make inadequate progress. Support staff and teachers are not consistently clear about these pupils' individual needs, or how to support them. The school does not currently have a special educational needs coordinator to oversee this work or to ensure pupils' progress is checked, and this negatively affects the quality of provision on offer.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers and adults ensure that children experience a range of activities to support their learning indoors. However, the quality of childrens' learning is not good because they are not confident in using the outdoor area and its resources.
- There is some good teaching in the school, especially in art, music and PE. In these lessons, pupils learn well and make good progress because teachers plan the activities carefully taking into consideration where pupils are with their learning. If pupils become stuck or find the work too easy, they adjust the activities throughout the lesson.
- The school develops pupils' moral and social qualities adequately. However, there are missed opportunities to develop their cultural and spiritual qualities or understanding, for example through using and celebrating pupils' diverse backgrounds when planning lessons and activities.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. While most pupils behave well around the school and in the playground, behaviour in lessons varies according to the quality of teaching. Although most pupils are keen to learn, when tasks do not provide the right amount of challenge some pupils become fidgety and distracted, or do not work hard enough.
- Pupils like coming to school. While they come from a wide range of backgrounds and heritages, they get on well with one another. They are polite, greet visitors warmly and take good care of their school.
- Inspectors found that pupils know about different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying. Pupils have a sensible understanding of how they can keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. Pupils say that staff deal with any incidents with very quickly. The school follows up and responds quickly to any rare incidents of bullying.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is inadequate because the school has not ensured that pupils are fully secure in the school grounds at all times. The school has put a system in place to increase security, but not all staff consistently follow the proper procedures. This is an issue that requires urgent attention.
- Appropriate checks and procedures for recruiting staff and taking care of vulnerable pupils are in place; statutory requirements are met and staff are appropriately trained in order to keep pupils safe within the school.
- As a result of an increased effort on the part of the school, pupils' attendance has improved and is now in line with the national average.

**The leadership and management are inadequate**

- Since the academy opened, the headteacher has not provided effective direction for other leaders and staff. The actions taken to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have not had enough impact and too many aspects of the school's performance are inadequate.
- Until very recently, leaders' analysis of information about the school's effectiveness, including that of pupils' progress, has not been rigorous or systematic. Recently, leaders have developed a more realistic view of the effectiveness of their work, which has helped them to identify what needs to be done for the school to improve.
- Over time, targets set for judging teachers' and leaders' performance have not been clear and measurable enough. This has limited their usefulness in holding staff to account for their effectiveness.
- Middle leaders (those responsible for subjects or aspects) are keen to be effective and carry out specific responsibilities. However, the lack of direction from senior leaders means that their work does not have enough impact on improving important areas of weakness.
- Leaders have not ensured that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good enough progress from their individual starting points. Plans for supporting these pupils lack clarity and rigour.
- Sports funding is used to provide a PE coordinator who has a clear view of how to improve the quality of PE teaching in the school and increase pupils' participation through extra clubs and activities. However, there has been no monitoring of impact of the provision by leaders of the school.
- Other than in PE, music and art, the range of subjects provided do not promote high levels of achievement. Pupils spend a high proportion of time in literacy- and numeracy-based lessons, but their achievement in reading, writing and mathematics remains inadequate. This is because pupils do not use their knowledge in other subjects to reinforce or extend their skills.
- The very small proportion of parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were largely positive about the school. However, some parents and carers who spoke to inspectors during the inspection were very unhappy about the leadership of the school and the progress their children make. The majority of staff who responded to the staff questionnaire also raised concerns about school leadership.
- The school chose not to work with the local authority during its first year of being an academy. The support the local authority is currently providing has been too recent to raise the pupils' low levels of achievement.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The original governing body did not hold the school to account for its performance, including that of pupils supported through the pupil premium funding.
  - The Griffin School Trust became involved with the school in January 2014. The newly re-organised governing body is now more aware of the school's weaknesses. It has been taking urgent steps to try to promote improvement through training. It is confident in its ability to challenge senior leaders, to use information on pupils' progress more rigorously and make leaders accountable for pupils' achievement compared to other schools locally and nationally. Governors understand the procedures for linking pay awards to the quality of teachers' work and are about to set suitably demanding targets for the headteacher.
  - Governors are in the process of checking their own range of skills to see how best they can use these in helping to support senior leaders more effectively.
  - Governors recognise that there is a strong need to improve the school's work with parents and carers, both in terms of day-to-day communication and to help them support their children's learning. As yet, there is no long-term plan as to how this will be achieved.
  - Governors carry out their statutory duties to keep pupils safe relating to recruitment and most aspects of safety. However, they have not ensured that systems and routines to keep pupils safe within the school grounds are consistently secure.



## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138364
<b>Local authority</b>	Waltham Forest
<b>Inspection number</b>	425458

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	640
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Liz Lewis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Patsy Fitzpatrick
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8539 1428
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